

MARCH 12, 2012

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Rm 2500, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06105

MONICA FORE
TESTIMONY AND EXHIBITS REGARDING:

S.B. NO 245 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECORDING OF POLICE
ACTIVITY BY THE PUBLIC

S.B. NO. 364 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING TRAFFIC STOP INFORMATION

H.B. NO. 5366 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING CIVIL ACTIONS AND
SUBPOENAS FILED TO HARASS AN INDIVIDUAL OR AFTER NUMEROUS
ACTIONS AGAINST THE INDIVIDUAL HAVE BEEN DISMISSED

Dear Legislators,

I am here today to testify regarding bills S.B. No. 245; S.B. No. 364; and H.B. No. 5366. In particular, I would like to speak about these bills as to how they relate to the City of Bristol. Today, I provide the committee with several exhibits as evidence that there is a real need to conduct research into the act of racial profiling by law enforcement officials. Many of you have heard my story. Many of you have read about the incidents of racial profiling in Bristol and how each and every time the officers and city officials were cleared by state and federal investigators.

The attached exhibits provide proof that city officials were dishonest in their statements to the public. It provides proof that outside actors aided city officials in covering up illegal and unlawful acts against minorities in the city, especially those who complained publicly about the misconduct. In fact, if the truth be told, city officials outright lied about the incidents. I ask that you compare and contrast the attached newspaper articles dated 2006, 2008, and 2012. I ask that you read the articles on Racial Profiling and Hate Crimes that are attached as my exhibits. What you will find is that in 2006 police officers and city officials lied about racial profiling statistics. The State of Connecticut African American Commission was not in a position to provide statistical data to anyone as they related to racial profiling. In the 2006 newspaper article you will find Lt. Grimaldi, now Captain Grimaldi and Councilmember Frank Nicasro now Representative Nicasro falsifying information regarding the Commission on African American Affairs and the Alvin W. Penn Racial Prohibition Act. They are in the newspaper taunting NAACP leaders and other minorities stating, "Where's the proof?" They knew they were being dishonest to the public but that the public would believe them because they had a badge, gun and the authority to falsifying their government documents.

For more than seven (7) years city officials and police officers lied about racial profiling to the public. After they were cleared by all investigators, they confessed publicly on January 1, 2012, that the incidents were true and that there was a "racist" radio station of which was known to the public as the "Nigger Free Radio Station."

As to H.B. 5366 (Raised), there is no way that our state legislators can vote on such a bill when government officials are lying in investigations. I am sharing with you evidence that will make a difference not only in me and my family's life, but a difference for the public at large. We cannot allow dishonesty in our government. We must weed out the bad and keep the good. It is well established that many of the public's complaints are being dismissed by those who are friends with the Respondent, especially those who are government officials. This is what happened in Bristol and is currently going on in the case of Fore v. Tunxis Community College.

Racial profiling is real. It is systemic. It must be stopped and not covered up. Will you take a stand against this injustice and uphold the state and federal constitution wherein an individual has a right to due process of law and equal protection of the law? It should not matter how many times an individual comes forward to complain. This is the American way of freedom. Look at me, I complained for over seven years. Government officials and attorneys were cleared each and every time only later to have City of Bristol Officials come forward and tell on themselves after their friends CLEARED them.

In closing, I ask you to remember our forefathers and how they fought, bled and died to make a difference so that EVERYONE can be treated equally.

Monica Free (Erwin)
583 Prospect Ave. Unit 24
West Hartford, CT 06105
860-206-1440 (h)
860-897-6244 (c)



English

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Bristol Press, The (CT) - Monday, July 31, 2006

Author: Amy V. Talit

Monica Ervin and the Rev. E.J. Moss, president and treasurer respectively, of the city's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, recently stated that police in Bristol target black people when enforcing the law.

Moreover, Ervin said her issue with city police is not so much about race as is the level of competence with which some officers handle situations.

However, police dispute the racial profiling charge and defend their procedures.

Police cited the Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act, a state law requiring police departments to maintain reports of the race, gender and age of all stopped motorists as well as the reason for the stop and its disposition.

Each month, this information is sent to a watchdog organization, the Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission for review. Any police department that the commission finds to be racially profiling would immediately have state funding cut.

"If we were truly targeting people," Lt. Thomas Grimaldi said, "I can only assume it would have been addressed at the state level." He asked, "Where's the proof? That's the real question. Where's the proof?"

Grimaldi said in most instances when initiating a vehicle stop, the officer does not know the race, gender or age of the motorist.

"We pull people over for the action committed not for who they are or what they look like and often our officers don't even know what the person looks like ... until they've made contact," Grimaldi said.

"Are our officers aggressive?" said Grimaldi, "Yeah, as our statistics show, and they are quite impressive. Our officers do a lot of hard work ... it's brought down the number of motor vehicle accidents ... it's brought down crime."

Based on the May numbers submitted by Bristol police to the African-American Affairs Commission, of the 806 motorists stopped - not all were issued tickets - 652, or 80.89 percent were white; while 79, or 9.8 percent were Hispanic; 8, or 0.99 percent were Asian and 9 people, or 1.1 percent of motorists' race was unknown. Fifty-eight motorists, or 7.1 percent, of the motorists stopped in May were black.

In June, of the 784 motorists stopped, 636, or 81.12 percent were white; 79, or 10 percent were Hispanic; 55, or 7 percent were black; while 8 motorists, or 1 percent were Asian and 1, or 0.12 percent were Indian while 5 people, or 0.6 percent were unknown by race.

"Looking at the statistics," said Councilor Frank Nicastro, "I don't see racial profiling is there."

Nicastro, council liaison to the Board of Police Commissioners, said he requested the statistics for May and June in response to the allegations and complaints of racial profiling, "I wanted to see exactly what was happening."

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Shortly after Ervin was issued a ticket July 20 for failure to display a license plate, she said she believed it was because of who she is. Friday, Ervin, who described herself as a mother of four struggling to protect her children and survive, said she makes no apologies for who she is, and that while she wonders why her motor vehicle stop garnered so much police attention at the time, she does not believe it was strictly a race issue.

Ervin questioned why so much work was done to document her stop, including photos being taken and several other officers being called to the scene.

Police Chief John DiVenere said the officer who stopped Ervin said it was not the first time he has taken pictures of similar violations. The chief also said the officer, who said that before the stop he did not know what Ervin looked like, was aware of the recent allegations of racial profiling on the part of the police department, and may have felt the need to have extra documentation of the purpose for the stop should his integrity later be called into question.

The chief said it is department policy, in an effort to ensure officer safety, that a second officer is sent as back-up on all motor vehicle stops. Occasionally, said DiVenere, the original officer will call off the backup.

DiVenere also said the officer who stopped Ervin called for a supervisor when she asked that the mayor and chief be called to the scene.

The city's officers are required to call for a supervisor whenever they feel a situation is getting out of hand or when they have a question as to how to handle a situation or problem, said DiVenere. He said he reviewed this incident and the officer acted properly according to department guidelines by calling a supervisor to the scene.

DiVenere said he encourages patrol officers to have a high profile in the community because national studies have shown a direct correlation to a reduction in a city or town's crime rate when police officers are visibly enforcing motor vehicle laws.

DiVenere said with the recent allegations that the city's police force engages in racial profiling, a large majority of officers are feeling unsupported by politicians in the city. The chief said he has addressed officers to let them know they are supported and to "continue the high-profile policing."

The chief also said he has seen the direct correlation with high profile crimes being solved more quickly because the city's officers are visible and are visibly enforcing laws.

A traffic stop is an integral part of preventing crime, said DiVenere. Though a motorist receiving a ticket for not wearing a seat belt or not having a front license plate affixed to their vehicle may think the police should "go out and fight real crime," the perception by those engaging in criminal activities that they too can be pulled over for a seemingly minor motor vehicle violation leads to their often choosing to conduct their criminal enterprises elsewhere, he said.

Police officers also may use a minor violation to pull over a vehicle they believe may be engaged in an unseen criminal activity. The practice of doing so is known in police and legal circles as a "pretext stop."

A "pretext stop" is defined by Steve Holbert and Lisa Rose in their book "The Color of Guilt and Innocence: Racial Profiling and Police Practices in America" as "stopping a driver for a minor traffic violation in order for the officer to carry out his or her primary objective, searching for evidence of a greater offense for which the officer lacked probable cause to conduct the stop."

Traffic Lt. Kevin Morrell said a pretext stop is not evidence of racial profiling because "[the officer] had probable cause to stop the car. You had a violation. It's not like you're making things up."

"Each stop is unique," said Morrell.

Morrell also noted the practice of pretext stops have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Friday, Ervin said the concern she raised at a recent Board of Police Commissioners meeting about witnessing an officer pull over a car full of black men in a shopping plaza parking lot and demand the driver's license was not to accuse the officer of racism per se

but whether the situation was handled properly. She claims she would have had the same questions if she witnessed the officer treat a car full of white people the same way. Ervin said when the officer first demanded his driver's license, which the driver did not have, the officer didn't tell the man he was being stopped for having a broken taillight and said nothing about the reason for the stop. It was the lack of communication that Ervin said she found most offensive.

Ervin also said she believes the large majority of the city's police force is made up of "phenomenal officers," but she also believes there are some officers who are racially motivated in their actions and she fears that the few "bad seeds" may poison the entire well.

"This city is a good city," Ervin said Friday, "but changes need to be made, and not just in the police department."

"This is 2006, we shouldn't have to teach racial tolerance," she said referring to the diversity training scheduled for all of the city's police officers.

Nicastro said he feels the diversity training is a wonderful thing, but that it shouldn't stop with the police department.

"I think it can only bring benefits to the city," said Nicastro.

Ervin also has called for a civilian review board to be put in place to monitor and address residents' complaints about the police department. She said America is a country based on a system of checks and balances and she believes the police department needs to also have a system of checks and balances in place in the form of a civilian, citizen review board.

DiVenere said the city has a civilian, citizen review board for the police department - the Board of Police Commissioners - but, it is incumbent upon residents to address the board with issues and complaints. "That's what they're there for," he said.

Section: News

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Bristol News



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Amy V. Talit covers police and fire departments and homeland security. Contact her at atalit@bristolpress.com or 584-0504 ext. 256.

City NAACP leaders assail police

False reports, profiling alleged

By Amy V. Talit
The Bristol Press

BRISTOL — Two officers of the recently reactivated Bristol NAACP branch brought a host of complaints before the Board of Police Commissioners Tuesday night charging that police officers file inaccurate reports and racial profiling exists within the department.

At the outset Monica Ervin, president of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, accused four police officers of lying in a report written about an incident involving Ervin's daughter and landlord.

Ervin alleged that Officer Brian Andrews did not accurately report a complaint in which she alleged that her landlord snuck into her apartment and used his cellular phone camera to take pictures of her daughter who was in bed.

She further alleged that Andrews' supervisor, Sgt. Michael Healey, his supervisor, Lt. Richard Brown, and his supervisor, Capt. Daniel McIntyre, had all knowingly accepted and signed off on Andrews' report of the events.

Ervin demanded a panel to investi-

gate her complaint. There was no specific response Tuesday from commissioners on that request.

Lt. Thomas Grimaldi, the department's records division lieutenant and public information officer, said he could not comment on Ervin's accusations. He said he would need to look into it by pulling the appropriate files before he could respond.

After addressing her personal issue, Ervin leveled a claim of racial profiling within the police department recounting an incident she experienced Sunday after shopping at Price Chopper in Bristol Commons Plaza on Farmington Avenue.

She said she witnessed a police officer closely follow a vehicle full of black men up and down aisles of the parking lot until the vehicle parked. According to Ervin, the officer tailing the vehicle then stopped his cruiser and demanded the driver provide him with identification.

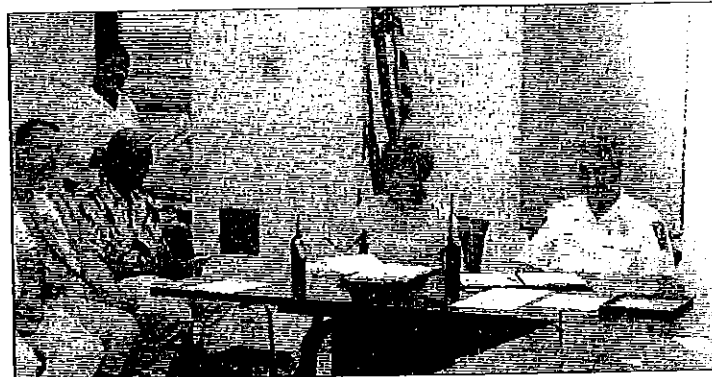
Ervin said when a second officer arrived, she asked him what the first officer's name was, but did not interfere in the proceedings. She said she has notes she took of the incident. She claimed the men under surveillance may have been arrested if she had not been there. She did not identify the officers. She said she has asked the state's U.S. Senators, U.S. Rep. John Larson, 1st District, and state Reps. William Hamzy, R-Plymouth and Betty Boukus, D-Plainville, and state Sen. Thomas Colapietro, D-Bristol, to meet with her on this concern.

Again, police officials were unable to comment specifically on that case.

Typically visitors to commission meetings are restricted to speaking during a specific public commentary period, but Ervin and the Rev. E. J. Moss, NAACP branch treasurer, broke into discussions on several occasions.

Moss said "it's most unconscionable" that the youths who were charged with the June 11 vandalism of Chippinnee Golf Club in which swastikas and racist graffiti were found are not facing additional hate crime charges.

The youths were not charged with hate crimes, according to a statement Monday from Grimaldi, because based on the investigating officers' investigation, the crimes fell short of meeting



Mike Crazzi/The Bristol Press

President of the Bristol NAACP chapter Monica Ervin, far left standing, addresses a host of concerns about the city's police department at Tuesday's police commission meeting.

the guidelines of a hate crime as defined in the state statute.

Moss claimed that police officers responding to calls do not always have pen and paper to write down what is being said, and he questioned the likelihood of the officers' reports being accurately written.

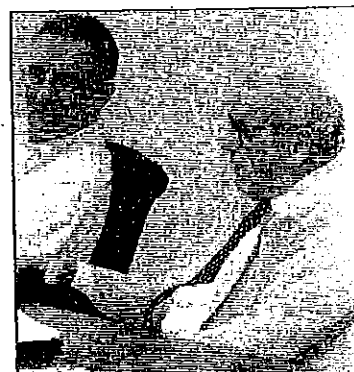
"It is not possible," said Moss, "for officers to go to a scene and write an accurate report without a pen and paper."

Moss further demanded Police Chief John DiVenere require all officers to carry and use a pen and paper at all scenes to accurately document the situation.

Moss also requested the police department's reports of all vehicles stopped in the last three years for defective equipment. He said he wants to know the names and ethnicity of the motorists pulled over, as he believes "racial profiling is alive and well."

There was no response Tuesday on that request from commissioners. "The reverend is spouting about racial profiling. He is grandstanding just as state Rep. (Roger) Michelle (D-Bristol) did back when the NAACP decided to get involved with the radio station," said police union local President Ken Gallup, adding the NAACP officials have no proof of their claims.

As an example Gallup said the situation Moss referred to about an officer lacking pen and paper was misrepresenting. The officer had pen and paper, but did not have a statement form and had to return to his cruiser to get one, he noted.



Mike Crazzi/The Bristol Press

Mayor Bill Stortz, at right, speaks during Tuesday's police commission meeting. City Councilor Frank Nicastro is at left.

police arrests

All information listed below was provided by area police departments.

BRISTOL — Charlie Lugo, 24, of 106 Federal St. was charged Monday with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

Mitchell Bachman, 18, of 184 Mountain View Ave. was charged Tuesday with second-degree breach of peace, third-degree assault, driving under the influence and another motor vehicle violation.

Jesus Garcia, 23, of 164 Park St. was charged Tuesday with interfering with an officer, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and several other motor vehicle violations.



Mike Crazzi/The Bristol Press

The Rev. E.J. Moss, treasurer of the city chapter of the NAACP, speaking at Tuesday's police commission meeting.

Bristol Police Rebuild Image

Years Of Crisis,
Scandal To Undo

By **DON STACOM**
dstacom@courant.com

BRISTOL — Like police officers everywhere, Lt. Brian Gould is accustomed to the rage of belligerent prisoners and ornery drunks.

But random abuse during a coffee break was never supposed to be part of his job.

In the midst of Bristol's notorious police scandals, Gould, an officer with plenty of commendations and a top-flight reputation, caught flak he didn't earn — like the time he was working back-to-back, eight-hour shifts and stopped at a convenience store to buy a Diet Coke.

"I was confronted by an agitated man. He proceeded to yell at me, telling me and everyone else in the store that I should be ashamed of myself and embarrassed to wear the BPD uniform. He continued to yell that he was disgusted with us, that the community had trusted us and we

BRISTOL, A4

IN THEIR WORDS

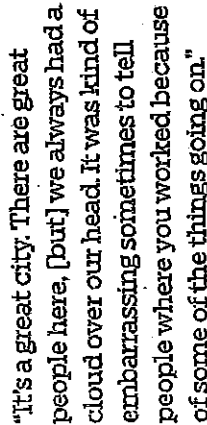
"Coming to work over the last several months has been a new experience.

We're approaching crime and community relations in a different manner. It's really enjoyable to come to work and have those opportunities."

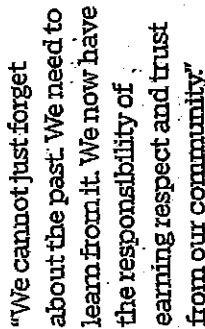


Capt. Thomas Grimaldi

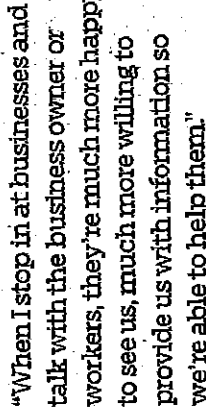
More quotes, Pages A4, A5



"It's a great city. There are great people here, [but] we always had a cloud over our head. It was kind of embarrassing sometimes to tell people where you worked because of some of the things going on."



"We cannot just forget about the past. We need to learn from it. We now have the responsibility of earning respect and trust from our community."



"When I stop in at businesses and talk with the business owner or workers, they're much more happy to see us, much more willing to provide us with information so we're able to help them."

Officer Scott Hayden

Continued from Page A1

violated that trust," Gould recalled a few years later.

"I stood there thinking, 'All I wanted was a diet soda.'"

Gould's encounter wasn't uncommon. As with most of the 125 men and women of the city's police department, Gould was never part of the troubles that plagued the agency from 2005 through early 2011. Yet they all paid a price for a pattern of misconduct.

After each scandal surfaced, the department became the butt of new jokes. Some officers simply stopped talking about their jobs. One admitted that while in line at Starbucks, he felt like covering the word "Eristol" on his uniform patch.

But as 2012 begins, the police department has begun restoring its image -- inside headquarters and out.

Under a widely respected new chief, police are campaigning to build community relations, step up visibility and reduce citizen complaints.

"I want everyone to come to work and be proud," says Chief Eric Osantech, who took control of the department amid a crisis last winter and was appointed to the top job several months later. "This department has always had the work ethic, it's always had great people. But it didn't have direction from the top."

A fresh command staff is promoting a theme of public service and respect, encouraging supervisors to reward officers for strong performance, calmly correct honest mistakes and quickly and consistently reprimand violators.

"Coming to work over the last several months has been a new experience," said newly promoted Capt. Thomas Grimaldi. "We're approaching crime and community relations in a different manner. It's really enjoyable to come to work and have those opportuni-

ues.
The public is noticing.

"It's a little early to tell, but we haven't had many complaints since [contracts] took over," said leader Frank Mangione, head of the city's NAACP branch. "We asked us to place him a little time. Well, we put no

good."

City council member Ken Cockayne, who had stunned city hall when he publicly demanded the resignation of Osantschi's predecessor, said there has been a culture change in the chief's office. "You call about something now and you get action. You used to get excuses," Cockayne said. "And I hear it from people on the street; I see it with the officers. There's a whole new feeling in the department. It's like night and day."

ਭਾਗਵਤ ਗੀਤਾ

For 9½ years, the department suffered through lazy or inept supervisors, an abusive captain with a drinking problem and a retired-on-the-job detective. One patrol officer was arrested after allegedly choking his pregnant girlfriend at Disney World, and another was charged with drunkenly smashing a cruiser into a utility pole.

Outside investigators failed to probe an allegation that officially collected hazardous waste ended up over a fence at the station, but yet again potently suggested it was true. An internal conflict within

drowned a wounded cat in a bucket. Civilian complaints of brutality rose, and morale among honest officers eroded.

A clique of politically popular officers appeared to violate rules with impunity, while most of the force adopted a code of "do your work, keep your head down and go home." Through it all, top commanders ignored, denied or covered up problem after problem.

Politicians followed suit. The city council simply pretended nothing was wrong. One mayor spent two years lamenting how a few city streets were cluttered with abandoned utility poles, but said not a word as his police department devolved into dysfunction. The police board, loaded with political appointees assigned to keep watch over the agency, argued instead about parking fines or barking dog complaints.

Supervisors privately described a tone of ineffectiveness and paternalism in the way they managed the community's angry demands. Community members noted that even though each time had never fought out, yet mostly punished the ones who wanted their return. While the ideology and internal motivation

Visit courant.com/bristolpd for previous coverage of the police department's problems.

tors were accused of disloyalty at staff meetings or frozen out of promotions. Even so, many officers, outraged by favoritism and mismanagement, risked their careers by discreetly telling the truth to politicians and the press.

Osentsch, a captain at the time, and a network of mid-level managers quietly struggled to coach patrol officers to stay positive. Hard-working detectives and patrol officers who had no hand in any misconduct frequently bore the brunt of the public backlash.

"It's a great city. There are great people here, [but] we always had a cloud over our head," said Det. Lt. Kevin Morrell, a 24-year veteran who until recently was head of the traffic unit. "It was kind of embarrassing sometimes to tell people where you worked because of some of the things that are."

NEW! 2000 EDITION
"An important book for anyone who is involved in any type of business or industry. It is a must-read for all business leaders and managers." —*Dr. Robert K. Yin, University of California, Berkeley*

THEORY



"This is my first chief change. It's almost comparable to a football team getting a brand-new coach. You have to be optimistic. It's a new regime; you have to hope for the best — which it's been."

Officer Chris Bird

Image

Continued from Page 44

turing. He filled command slots with officers known for integrity, promoting Grimaldi to run the patrol division and making Morrell chief of detectives. Most of the old administration was already gone.

Osanitsch made the rounds of every division and every shift, assuring officers that with their help, the city of Bristol would soon have a respected force again. He promised even-handed treatment and a willingness to listen. Officers with alcohol troubles, family problems or financial crises will get help. Those who legitimately use force to make arrests would get management's support, he said, but any who bully citizens or deliberately violate rules would pay a price.

Newly promoted commanders revised policies to build accountability and are campaigning to earn the department state accreditation. They advise officers not to dwell on what went wrong before, but to consistently do solid work.

"We cannot just forget about the past, we need to learn from it," Gould said. "We now have the responsibility of earning respect and trust from our community."

Gould's assignment is to screen job applicants and then instill an ethical code that can last for their careers. Osanitsch views it as a key position.

"Everything is your people, everything," Osanitsch said. "We're more than willing to drop candidates if we see red flags being raised. When you hire in this field, you have the potential to have that person for 25 years or more. You have to be selective. I'd rather go short than hire for the sake of hiring."

At the same time, the agency is eager to rebuild. Its roster dwindled during the bad years, and is down more than 20 people from its peak. Despite the city's budget crisis, Osanitsch wants to bolster the patrol ranks to handle steadily increasing calls.

He is transferring one or two headquarters jobs to civilians to free up officers, and is studying how to change shift assignments to maximize staffing during peak



Sgt. Russ Marcham

demand. Even so, the department needs to bring in a significant number of recruits in the next year. Osanitsch's immediate goals are to create a full-service traffic unit to crack down on speeding and reckless driving, the most frequent complaint from residents. He also wants to restore the crime suppression unit, a team that targeted trouble spots.

Even short-staffed, police have been getting results in the past year. The narcotics unit arrested nearly a half-dozen suspected heroin dealers, and the patrol division won praise from downtown businesses by cleaning up the seedy lower Summer Street section.

New Rules

Young officers and veterans alike are watching to see if the promised changes happen.

"This is my first chief change," Officer Chris Bird said. "It's almost comparable to a football team getting a brand-new coach. You have to be optimistic. It's a new regime; you have to hope for the best — which it's been."

Two months after Osanitsch was sworn in, he faced a test

"Everyone is entitled to have an 'oops' on the job, have an honest goof-up. I can defend you on that. With some of the things that happened here in the past, guys maybe hadn't done their jobs or had embarrassed themselves and added to that stigma of low morale. All of that seems to have changed."

Officers filed a minor misdemeanor charge against an off-duty lieutenant who had been in a dispute with his wife. Osanitsch drove to work on a Sunday night to collect the officer's badge and gun, and made sure the officer had access to the employee assistance program if he wanted it. The case was resolved and the lieutenant has resumed work.

Longtime officers say that's a change from the days when the matter might have been buried or held over the lieutenant's head for years. Morrell said the new chief's philosophy demands discipline, but without grudges: "I've seen him give people a suspension, but then it's over. They'll shake hands with him after."

Sgt. Russ Marcham, one of the agency's newer street supervisors, emphasizes the line between errors and misconduct. In addressing patrol officers, he puts forward four rules.

"Do your job, don't embarrass yourself, don't embarrass me, don't paint me into a corner where I can't defend you," Marcham said. "If you're doing your job, No. 2 is not going to happen, No. 3 is not

going to happen, No. 4 is not going to happen."

"Everyone is entitled to have an 'oops' on the job, have an honest goof-up. I can defend you on that," he said. "With some of the things that happened here in the past, guys maybe hadn't done their jobs or had embarrassed themselves and added to that stigma of low morale. All of that seems to have changed."

While the department still has some internal rivalries, officers say the mood is lighter now in cruisers, the locker room and the staff lounge. More relatives and off-duty police show up for promotion ceremonies, and they're more likely to stay and chat afterward.

Officer Scott Hayden says the results are obvious every day.

"When I stop in at business agencies and talk with the business owner or workers, they're much more happy to see us, much more willing to provide us with information so we're able to help them," Hayden says. "We feel like we're more of a functioning police department again. It's much better that we can work more closely with the public."

RACIAL PROFILING IN BRISTOL, CONNECTICUT

“WHERE’S THE PROOF?”

Quote By:
Lt. Thomas Grimaldi,
Bristol Press July 7, 2006

INTRODUCTION

"Faith is the most powerful force in the world...It is the one thing. It is the light people can't put out." (Williams & Dixie, 2003, p.2-3)

In November 2005 minorities in the City of Bristol gathered together to voice their concerns regarding racial profiling with the State of Connecticut NAACP President, Scot X. Esdaile. Several people came forward and told their stories of how they were mistreated by city officials, their employers, in housing and how their children were being discriminated against in the city schools. One individual stood up in the meeting and informed other minorities that he was beat up by police officers and that their statement to him was, *"God isn't going to help you"* after he had called on his God for help. Another young black man told the crowd how he and his wife were viewing a certain neighborhood in hopes of buying a home when he was suddenly approached by detectives who said he and his wife were on the wrong side of town. And still, a young single mother said that her child was being called racial names in school and that her child was discouraged by the thought that someone could be so mean to her when she had done nothing wrong. Many stories were told to the audience by minorities of the blatant discrimination they faced by individuals who had been sworn into office and had taken oaths to protect all people. Unfortunately, instead of listening to minorities complaints and working together to correct the problems city officials along with two agents of the FBI bonded together and notified the public that minorities were dishonest in their statements and that there was no racial profiling going on in the city. The sad part of the story is that the FBI never investigated minorities' complaints in order for them to clear the city of racial profiling and other complaints. As stated in the October 15, 2006 article of the Bristol Press, *FBI Investigating Police Department*, Chief DiVenere stated, *"the FBI took the departments reports, but never interviewed him. As far as he knows the FBI hasn't spoken with anyone else in the department either."* Furthermore, the article also informs the public that former Mayor William Stortz confirms Chief DiVenere's statements and states, *"I talked a couple of times with somebody from the FBI...not on an interview basis. Certainly I didn't provide any information to them. I would not do that without talking to the lawyers."*

Thankfully, God has been and still is on our side and we write this article to inform our city officials that change is needed to ensure all people are treated equally and with respect. On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered the speech entitled, *"I Have A Dream."* In it he said,

"...we've come here today to dramatize the shameful condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was the promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (King, 1997, p11)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. further encouraged minorities to continue to fight for justice when he said, *"We must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, When will you be satisfied"* (King, p 21). In 2005 Hurricane Katrina forced us to look at the status of minorities in America. Many minorities are still at a disadvantage in this country, within our cities. Therefore, we cannot be satisfied until everyone in America receives equal justice as guaranteed by law.

Today, we, as minorities in the City of Bristol are seeking to carry on the message of our forefathers who fought, bled and died for us to have the right to live free from discrimination in this country. No longer do we have to march down city streets, endure the hardships of being bitten by dogs and sprayed with water by fire hoses until our skin falls off of our backs. No longer do we have to fear the night, in that, we could be pulled out of our beds and dragged to the nearest tree to be lynched for our wanting to be free Americans. Our forefathers fought a good fight and laws were created so that we could have the right to a decent education, fair housing, the ability to apply for any job we wish, and to be free from racial profiling. And today we stand before our city government demanding those rights be carried out. Additionally, the Declaration of Independence supports our stance and states, *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that, among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*

Therefore, we as being a few minorities fighting for equal justice for all minorities in the city ask that our city officials grant us our wishes, read through this document and set up a time and meeting place so that we can discuss the issues at hand and make the necessary changes in order for there to be equality in our city government for all people in the City of Bristol, Connecticut.

*Concerned Minorities of Bristol
Presented to the City Council Meeting
August 12, 2008*

DEFINING AND MEASURING RACIAL PROFILING

"Racial profiling by police is a complex phenomenon that is extremely hard to measure. We all want complete answers on whether such profiling is taking place in communities, but we won't get those answers from incomplete data. Unless we take the time to ask the right questions and get the right answers, the truth about how much racial profiling is really going on will remain unknown."

(Riley & Ridgeway, 2004)

As stated in the above quote no one knows for sure how big a problem racial profiling is in America. Racial profiling has many definitions but the suggested rule for racial profiling relates to the police, in that, the author Fred Pampel states, *"Since police have the legitimate authority to use force and make arrests, the consequences of racial profiling by police are particularly serious and have special importance. Hence, racial profiling most often refers to police actions. Therefore, the definition for racial profiling refers to "any police-initiated action that relies on race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than the behavior of an individual..."* (Pampel, 2004, p 5)

Although the definition states police initiated action there are those who believe that racial profiling also relates to those who are stopped while walking, live in certain neighborhoods, shop in certain stores, and travel throughout the various airports. And still, others believe that racial profiling can be seen in our city schools when teachers use race as a factor in disciplining children. (Pampel, 2004). No one will ever know to what extent racial profiling is happening in our cities by police officers due to the fact that the only data being collected is for motorists who are stopped on city streets and on the highways.

Amnesty International recognized that racial profiling is a big problem in the United States and is concerned that little is being done to correct the problem. As stated in the book, *Driving While Black*, Amnesty International states:

"While only a minority of the thousands of law enforcement officers in the United States engage in deliberate and wanton brutality, Amnesty International discovered that too little was being done to monitor or check officers who do persistently cross the line and engage in police brutality or abuse. In essence, the organization found evidence that racial and ethnic minorities were disproportionately the victims of police misconduct, including false arrest and harassment." (Meeks, 2000, p 35)

Furthermore, Amnesty International launched a year long campaign and states, *"...in October 1998 with a 150 page report entitled Rights For All, Amnesty International revealed a persistent and widespread pattern of human rights violations taking place within the borders of the United States." (Meeks, 2000, p36)*

In response to Amnesty International's concerns President Clinton in 1999, *"ordered a memorandum to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of the Interior to begin addressing the problem of racial profiling." (Meeks, 2000, p18)* The State of Connecticut Commission on African American Affairs is collecting data from the many different police departments across the state in order to understand how big the problem is in Connecticut. Unfortunately, the collection of data is not complete and the information has not been examined in order for the commission to complete its study on the subject. In the meantime, the State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice has provided individuals with a form to fill out should they feel they have been a victim of racial profiling. Public Act 99-198, *An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Statistics*, prohibits any law enforcement agency from stopping, detaining, or searching any motorist when the stop is motivated solely by considerations of the race, color, ethnicity, age, gender, or sexual orientation. Sadly, a few minorities also state that they were abused by the officer after being stopped. And so, the next question one may ask is "what's the difference between racial profiling and brutality?"

There is much confusion as to the difference between racial profiling and police brutality. Both can be committed by the police but according to Pampel 2004:

"...racial profiling differs from police brutality. Both may reflect discrimination and produce anger and protest among minorities. Yet, racial profiling stems from the use of race, ethnicity, and national origin in determining suspects of crime, while brutality involves the unlawful use of excessive force."

Another question one may ask is, "Is racial profiling illegal? Again, according to the author Pampel 2004:

"Use of race, ethnicity, or national origin alone to initiate a police action, sometimes called, hard profiling has few supporters and clearly violates constitutional protection for equal protection. Use of race, ethnicity, and national origin as one of several characteristics in a profile (soft profiling) appears legal in most circumstances. Proponents of racial profiling support the latter use, while opponents argue that use of race, ethnicity, or national origin in any form violates the constitutional rights of citizens."

Racial Profiling As It Relates To The City of Bristol

The residents in the City of Bristol will never know how big a problem racial profiling is due to the fact that our city officials refuse to deal with the subject. Whenever minorities complain about being racially profiled by an officer or detective they (the minority) are told that the police do not operate in that manner. Furthermore, the police state that the individual making the complaint was caught in an illegal act and they are justified in stopping the individual.

Most often the police get away with stopping minorities due to the fact that the Supreme Court ruled that *"police can stop vehicles for traffic violation as a pretext to check for the evidence of more serious crimes. Pretext refers to a motive put forth to cover the real reason."* (Pampel, 2004, p10). But who can really tell if these stops are legal or illegal? Moreover, in a Bristol Press article written by Amy Talit, *Accused of Profiling, Police Cite Stats*, Lt. Thomas Grimaldi asks, *"Where's the proof?"* He informs the public that the Commission On African American Affairs is overseeing the police department and will cut funds to the city if racial profiling is going on. Further in the report, Lt. Grimaldi states, *"I can only assume it would have been addressed at the state level. He asked, where's the proof? That's the real question. Where's the proof?"*

It is very disappointing to read the statements in the Bristol Press by our city officials, in that, the Commission On African American Affairs is not in the position to address the data collection it has received from the various police departments across the state. As told by an employee at the Commission on African American Affairs, the department has yet to hire a company to examine and report its findings to the commission. Therefore, how can Lt. Grimaldi state that there is no racial profiling going on in the city? And to add to the disappointment, State Representative and Councilman Frank Nicastro states in the Bristol Press, *"Looking at the statistics, I don't see racial profiling is there."* And so, the troubling factor to those statements is that there are no checks and balances in our city government. After reading the contradicting comments in the press to the public by our city officials the public needs to ask our city government, "Where's your integrity?"

POLICE OFFICER PLUS BADGE EQUALS POWER

"Whenever a person enters a new walk of life, such as policing, there is a natural desire to fit in, to be accepted, to overcome the signs of being a newcomer and an outsider. The new police officer needs to learn early that the desire to fit in and be accepted can lead to trouble if the department and its members have bad habits – if the department tolerates or even fosters corruption, brutality, incompetence, bigotry, acceptance of gratuities and other wrongful conduct... The principal challenge of all careers is to preserve what is best in ourselves and to change in ways that better us – but in policing, and all other lines of work, there can be, and often are temptations to forsake our best selves and to change for the worse."
(Delattre, 1994)

Fred Pampel, the author of *Racial Profiling*, discusses the topic of quality of life policing. The writer talks about community policing and how the practice seeks *"to prevent crime and improve community relations by integrating officers into the local community and having them work closely with neighborhood residents."* According to the author the solution is to deal with misdemeanors that affect the safety of the neighborhood. He states that such disorders include, *"the actions of panhandlers, drunks, addicts, rowdy teens, prostitutes, loiterers, gangs, drug sellers, and strangers."* The author goes on to say, *"Police control of minor offenses or quality of life crimes makes residents less fearful and able to avoid unpleasant encounters outside their homes."*

Although the actions by the police in practicing "quality of life policing" are to ensure the safety of the people in the community minorities in the City of Bristol are troubled by the fact that the police only enforce this community policing on the west end of the city. Teenagers in the area complain as well as minority business owners that the police sit right outside of their stores and hassle the teenagers that goes into their businesses. The police officers try to justify their conduct by stating that they were asked to patrol the neighborhood due to a high volume of crime in the area. But is this really true? Are there statistical numbers to show that the west end is the only part of the city with a high rate of crime? One should think not. With the many reports of vandalism on Memorial Boulevard one would think that the police would have patrol cars sitting on that end of town in order to catch the culprits who are destroying the veteran's statues. Unfortunately, minorities have yet to see a police car sitting in that area of town for several hours to catch the criminal(s). And still, there have been numerous complaints about vandalism of a business on Lake Avenue. During a Board of Police Commissioners meeting the owner was told that the police could not sit outside her business in order to catch the criminal(s). Therefore, one could believe that minorities are being racially profiled on the west end due the fact that there is a high volume of police activity on that end of town.

As to the racial profiling of minorities who are stopped while driving, the list of complaints goes on and on. Teenagers constantly complain about receiving tickets when they are involved in an accident or are driving with their friends in the car. Recently a teenager said he was given a ticket for an accident he didn't commit. He stated that the officer involved only questioned the other driver who was a volunteer firefighter and did not speak to him about the accident. He stated that he was very upset about the incident and felt he couldn't do anything about the matter. No one will ever know the truth about what takes place on these types of stops due to the fact that the police are the ones writing the reports.

MINORITIES ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE POLICE

"From a legal point of view racial profiling is tricky because it can be difficult to prove. Seldom do investigators recover a smoking gun with fingerprints on it. This is why a national movement has been launched by politicians of color and civil rights leaders to mandate that law enforcement agencies keep statistics of whom they are stopping, questioning, detaining, and searching." (Meeks, 2000, p 7)

Forum On

Hate Crimes

In

Bristol, Connecticut

July 23, 2008

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INTRODUCTION

"Police may resist activists' and community leaders' calls for hate crime charges because they find hate crimes ambiguous or are uncertain about what may constitute evidence of motivation. There is a disincentive for police to identify crimes as bias-motivated. Large numbers of hate crimes can lead to media reports that a city is not racially tolerant and detract from its image. The publicity that such cases draw and the marker of racial intolerance that comes with identifying hate crime create a reason for police and other local officials to deny such events happen in their city or town." (Bell, 2002, p.3)

It is our hope that this outline presented to city officials by some members of the minority community will assist us in informing our city government that change is needed in order for minorities to have the rights and privileges that our forefathers fought, bled and died for us to have.

Concerned Minorities of Bristol
July 23, 2008 Forum with city officials

SYMBOLS AND SLURS USED IN RACIAL HATE CRIMES

"Nooses are a repugnant symbol of racial hatred rooted in the lynching of Black Americans."

Senator Thomas Colapietro, Bristol, CT

Are nooses and cross burnings the only symbols used to intimidate minorities in hate crimes? Does the use of slurs etched, spray painted or written on public and/or private property constitute a hate crime if used during the crime of vandalizing. For this discussion we have researched the topic, "Hate Crimes In America," and have outlined some information as reference for this discussion. It is not the intent of minorities in this forum to educate city officials on the many different hate groups in America, the many different types of hate crimes or to give a full history of racial tension in America. The topic of discussion relates to the City of Bristol and the information used will be to inform our city officials that individuals should be charged with hate crimes when they desecrate public or private property with "Symbols and Slurs of Hatred."

Symbols and Slurs Used In Hate Crimes

- The website article "*Symbols of Hate*" describe at least twenty six symbols "most often used by white supremacist organizations."

Stormfront Logo; Celtic Cross; The Blood Drop; Aryan Nations; W.A.R. Logo; Hungarian Arrow and Cross; Odin's Rune; Deaths Head; NSDAP; Pinwheel Swastika; White Power; Iron Cross; Lightning Bolt; SA; 14 Words; Iron Eagle; National Alliance; American Front; 33/5; 88; Confederate Flag; World Church of the Creator; Crucified Skinhead; Posse Comitatus; Hammerskin; and Swastika.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) provides a clearer understanding of graphic and number symbols, racist acronyms, white power music and educates individuals about the use of these symbols. In its article, "*Hate On Display*," ADL states:

"Hate symbols are more than just "signs" demonstrating racist, anti-Semitic and anti-Christian attitudes and beliefs- these symbols are meant to instill a sense of fear and insecurity. One finds hate symbols scrawled on the outside walls of synagogues, churches and schools...These symbols give haters a sense of power

and belonging, and a quick way of identifying with others who share their ideology."

- *"List of Ethnic Slurs,"* by Wikipedia, the online free encyclopedia, outlines the many different slurs people use towards others in a derogatory way.
- As to the use of symbols and slurs, the article, *"The ABC's of Nooses and Hate Symbols,"* talks about the sharp increase of nooses and other symbols placed on public or private properties and states:

"Some were perpetrated out of overt racism and a wish to instill fear. Others probably were committed by people who were ignorant of the full scope of the noose's bloody symbolism."

The article outlines three clear things that this type of conduct does:

- a) First, regardless of the perpetrators intent...symbols still have power to signal violence- a power that not everyone recognizes.*
- b) Second, attempts to minimize such incidents as "harmless pranks" serve no one.*
- c) Third, new laws and policies alone...won't be enough to prevent another Jena.*

Hate Crimes In Connecticut

- Does Connecticut have laws making it illegal to desecrate public or private property and to use "Symbols and Slurs of Hatred" during the criminal activity?" According to the *"OLR Research Report"* Connecticut does have hate crime laws in which individuals can be arrested. As to how it relates to the City of Bristol the "third degree" of Bigotry or Bias Crimes would fit the pattern:

"A person commits the third degree crime if he intends to intimidate or harass a person or group of people because of their actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression and he (1) damages, destroys, or defaces any property..."

- Is the State of Connecticut experiencing hate crimes with the use of "Symbols and Slurs of Hatred?" The answer is, yes. As declared in Senator Thomas Colapietro's brochure to constituents in Bristol the state is *"Cracking Down On Hate Crimes."*

"Last year, Connecticut suffered through a rash of racist, intimidating noose incidents. This session, the General Assembly unanimously passed, and Governor Rell signed, legislation that makes it a hate crime – on par with cross burning – to hang a noose on public or private property with the intent to intimidate or harass another person."

The town of Southington recently dealt with the issue of hate crimes. On June 24, 2008, The Bristol Press highlighted the vandalism incident of a Southington church and as quoted by reporters James Craven and Amy Talit:

"The two were taken into custody and charged with...desecration of property and intimidation based upon bigotry or bias in the third-degree."

Crime In Our City

- After reviewing the incidents around the state, the next question is "Has the City of Bristol experienced hate crimes with the use of symbols and slurs?" According to city officials the answer is no. As for minority leaders in the City of Bristol, the answer is yes. And so, since there is "no meeting of the minds" we now look at the vandalism taking place in our city and the use of "*symbols and slurs*" that were either etched, spray painted or written on public and/or private properties when these crimes were committed.

VANDALISM IN OUR CITY

**"Does Bristol Have A Hate Crime Problem?"
Bristol Press 7/11/2008 by Steve Collins**

In the July 11, 2008 issue of the Bristol Press there was a question posed to the public for their response on hate crimes in the City of Bristol. Minorities in the city believe Bristol does have a problem while city officials stated that Bristol does not have a problem with hate crimes. Additionally, Chief John DiVenere states in the article, "*he doesn't know of any hate crimes occurring in the city for years.*" Outlined below are a few dates of the numerous incidents of vandalism that happened in the City of Bristol. After reviewing the following outline it will be evident to see that the comments to the press by city officials especially police officers state and believe that Bristol does have a problem with hate crimes. Should minorities feel safe in the city

when city officials are making contradicting statements to the public in the press? Do minorities have a right to be concerned?

Comments In The Bristol Press

"Vandalism Stunned City In 2002"

Bristol Press 01/01/2003 by Kristen Turick

[It's just incredible that there's no group they didn't miss...pointing out to epithets offensive to Jewish people, Holocaust survivors, Muslims, homosexuals, veterans, Puerto Ricans and African Americans... Each of the young men pleaded guilty in August to...one count of third-degree intimidation due to bias.]

"Racial Graffiti Seen As Hate Crime"

Bristol Press 7/21/2005 by Amy Talit

"Golf Club Vandalized"

Bristol Press 6/13/2006 by Johnny J. Burnham

[Moreover, a swastika was spray-painted on the hood of a white maintenance van, there was a racial slur painted on the driver's side, KKK painted on the rear and "stay in school" stretched across the passenger side.

Other swastikas, anti-Semitic and racial slogans were still partially visible around the maintenance area even after maintenance workers had already begun ridding the club of the vandals' work]

"Symbols Seen As Sign Of Vandals' Ignorance"

Bristol Press 6/14/2006 by Amy Talit

[Police...continued their investigation into the city's most recent hate crime...Grimaldi said this is the third such instance since the fall in which swastikas were used. The first was at the gates of a Jewish Cemetery and the second on a couple of vehicles parked behind a Surrey Drive apartment complex.]

"Chippanee Targeted For 2nd Time"

Bristol Press 6/15/2006 by Amy Talit

[...they know the police are on the case but they don't care...I mean they know the police are involved. It's not just an insult to us, but also to our police department...with the swastikas and kkk symbols...]

"Vandals strike again"

Bristol Press 06/15/2006 by Amy Talit

[Grimaldi said the incidents of swastikas appearing in various places throughout the city since the fall show the blatant ignorance of the vandals. He said the swastika is a symbol synonymous with hatred and intolerance and not a joking matter...After the weekend's most recent hate crime, Grimaldi said police are not limiting resources in the investigation, and are not automatically investigating the hate crimes as being connected.]

"Senior Center Marked With Hate Symbols"

Bristol Press 6/16/2006 by Amy Talit

[For the third time in five days, swastikas have been found spray-painted on a building in the city...Lt. Thomas Grimaldi said earlier in the week that the recent rash of hate crimes...he does not recall anything like the hatred being spewed out in five incidents since the fall when swastikas were painted on the gates of a Jewish cemetery...police said they don't know if they are dealing with a copycat vandal(s) or the same individual or group in each incident]

"Teens Accused In Vandalism But No Hate Crime Charges"

Bristol Press 7/18/2006 by Amy Talit

"Vandalism Suspect Arrested"

Bristol Press 11/02/2006 by Amy Talit

[...police have charged a 15-year-old city girl with a hate crime in addition to the vandalism...charging the girl with second-degree criminal mischief for the vandalism, and with intimidation based on bigotry or bias, a class "A" misdemeanor, for the content of the vandalism...]

"Swicklas Lauds PD For Vandalism"

Bristol Press 11/22/2006 by Amy Talit

[Councilman Art Ward, a Vietnam veteran, said... if more people maybe understood the meaning behind the monuments, a greater sense of pride would be felt throughout the community as a whole, including in those who have no connection to any of the wars for which monuments honor soldiers.]

CHARGING CRIMINALS WITH HATE CRIMES

"...residents of the communities in which crimes occur may worry about the police classifying crime as bias motivated because they do not want their community to be seen as racist. Community leaders may appeal to their political allies, who in turn pressure the police chief not to prosecute the incident as a hate crime." (Bell, 2002, p.13)

There has been much controversy over whether or not an individuals' right to free speech is violated when charging someone with a hate crime. *"The National Coalition Against Censorship,"* explains the differences between protected and unprotected speech and states, *"First Amendment rights are not absolute, and have some exceptions. Unprotected speech includes: Incitement to illegal activity and/or imminent violence; Defamation and libel; Obscenity; Threats and intimidation; and False advertising."*

As we look at the incidents around Bristol and review statements by our city officials to the public in the *Bristol Press* it is clear to see that those who are doing the criminal activity wish to instill fear in others. As stated in the *Bristol Press* on June 15, 2006, Lt. Grimaldi states:

"...the incidents of swastikas appearing in various places throughout the city since the fall show blatant ignorance of the vandals. He said the swastika is a symbol synonymous with hatred and intolerance and not a joking matter..."

The public was put on notice that hate crimes were occurring in our city by city officials and the *Bristol Press*. However, when minorities came forward and asked for something to be done about the situation they were frowned upon by city officials and were told that their complaints were "totally baseless" as described by Amy Talit in the *Bristol Press*. And still, when minorities requested for the FBI to investigate they were once again told by city officials that they [city officials] were cleared of all allegations and that there was no racism documented in our city. Chief DiVenere further informs the public in *The Step Saver/The Observer* on July 17, 2008 that our complaints were reviewed by the FBI and states, *"the FBI concluded that they were not hate crimes."* However, this statement is troubling to minorities especially when Captain Eric Osanitsch from the Bristol Police Department informs the public in the June 30, 2006 *Bristol Press* that:

"FBI agents had contacted the police department and requested they be able to look at certain reports of recent hate crimes, but no meeting was scheduled between officials of the two agencies. He also said the agents did not go to police headquarters Wednesday to read the reports."

And so, after reading the comments in the *Bristol Press* it is clear that our city officials wish to cover up the fact that hate crimes are occurring in our city. And what is more troubling is that after minorities complained to city officials the media is now only classifying the events as simple vandalism. This gives more reason for minorities to be concerned due to the fact that the author of *"Policing Hatred"* states, *"residents may request for hate crimes to be covered up so the town will not be seen in a negative way."* However, covering up hate crimes does no one any good. According to the article by the

US Department of Justice- "A Policymaker's Guide to Hate Crimes" it is worse when law enforcement officials fail to report hate incidents and states:

"To most advocacy organizations, the failure to report a hate crime is nearly as bad as the offense itself. Underreporting masks the true extent of hate crime activities, which encourages the perpetrators to continue their bigoted behavior and encourages similar behavior among their friends and associates..."

The above statement should be examined by our city officials due to the fact that vandalism is a serious problem in our city. In the January 28, 2005 issue of the *Bristol Press*, Councilman Art Ward states, *"We're [he and Burns] not just here as elected officials. We live here. What effects you effects us."* And so, if this is a true statement made by Councilman Art Ward now mayor, than it should also apply to minorities living in the city. Minorities have the right to live in the city free from harassment and discrimination. As to the vandalism, hate crime laws apply to much of the property that is being vandalized. Again, as stated by Councilman Art Ward in the October 15, 2006 issue of the *Bristol Press*:

"... it's especially upsetting to see vandalism on the boulevard because of its special role in honoring the men and women who have served in the military from Bristol. It's hallowed ground to many veterans..."

After reviewing the above information it is clear to see that there is a problem with the way city officials are handling the vandalism in our city. Bristol does have a problem with hate crimes. The information provided in this paper is not intended to be an exhaustive study of the laws as it pertains to hate crimes and free speech but it is enough for minorities to inform our city officials that our civil rights are being violated by city officials. Failure to correct this problem will only further violate our civil rights.

PLAN OF ACTION

"Hate promotes violence. Dialogue among conflicting parties and groups is one way to decrease hate and help prevent bias-motivated crimes. Restorative justice has emerged in the last three decades as a means of giving all who are stake-holders in a crime- victims, offenders

and the community to which they belong- a voice in how harm can be repaired And future harm prevented” (Coates, Umbreit, & Vos 2006).

Although we cannot change the past we can, however, change the future. It is sad that racism is still a very powerful subject that Americans argue over in this decade years after our forefathers marched through city streets and in Washington to change the way minorities had been [and still are being] treated in this country. At some point in time, change must occur because the future of our country is at stake. We must come together and work to build a strong united front or we will be overtaken by our enemies who desire to come into this country to blow up our buildings and kill as many people as possible. Our presidential candidates have recognized that the new president will have to address this problem as it has been one of the main focuses in this presidential campaign. Together minorities and city officials in the City of Bristol, Connecticut can start this change that everyone is talking about and show our brothers and sisters across the country that change is possible. Outlined below is a proposal that will kick start this change in Bristol and ensure that everyone is respected and receives equal protection under law as guaranteed in the U. S. Constitution of America. It is therefore proposed for our city officials to create a:

City of Bristol

Civil Rights / Minority Affairs Committee

Mission Statement

The goal of the City of Bristol Civil Rights / Minority Affairs Committee will be to ensure that individuals are treated with fairness by city employees and that there is no violation of an individuals civil and human rights.

Statement of Purpose

The City of Bristol Civil Rights / Minority Affairs Committee shall act as an independent committee wherein the committee shall have authority to investigate civilian complaints against city employees and shall be responsible in reporting its findings to the mayor and

proper authority for action. The committee shall work with city officials to build stronger relationships with minorities in the community. The committee shall also familiarize itself with policies and procedures of the various departments within the city in order to ensure that a fair review of the complaint brought to its attention takes place.

Appeals

It is the intent of the City of Bristol Civil Rights / Minority Affairs Committee to treat all parties with fairness. If either party does not agree with the findings of the committee the party aggrieved shall have the right to appeal to the city council for a final decision.

Appeals should be mailed to:

City of Bristol
Office of the Mayor
111 N. Main Street
Bristol, CT 06010

For more information
Please contact one of the following:

Monica Fore (Ervin)
114 Greene Street
Bristol, CT 06010
860-585-1833

William Whitehead
26 Nicholas Drive
Bristol, CT 06010
860-589-6341
860-716-6295 c

Rev. Daniel Collins
44 Pequot Road
Plainville, CT 06062
860-410-1086
860-796-3555 c

Rev. E. J. Moss
141 Promenade Dr.
Hamden, CT 06514
203-230-2642 h
203-915-0702

****This proposal is subject to change as more information is gathered for the creation of this committee.**

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06/13/2006

Moreover, a swastika was spray-painted on the hood of a white maintenance van, there was a racial slur painted on the driver's side, KKK painted on the rear and "stay in school" stretched across the passenger side.

Other swastikas, anti-Semitic and racial slogans were still partially visible around the maintenance area even after maintenance workers had already begun ridding the club of the vandals' work.